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U.S. Congress. House.

Minimum wage bill for  
federal employees

Washington

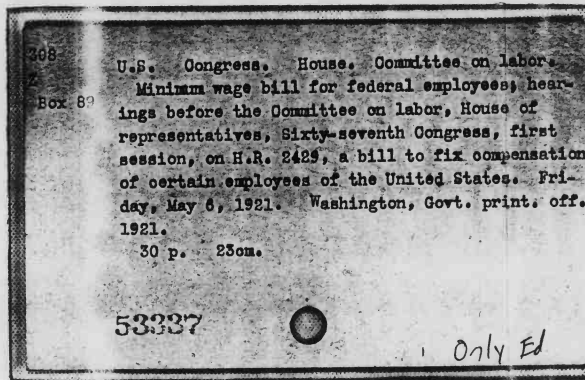
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MINIMUM WAGE BILL FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

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HEARINGS

BEFORE

THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SIXTY-SEVENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

H. R. 2429

A BILL TO FIX COMPENSATION OF CERTAIN EMPLOYEES  
OF THE UNITED STATES

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FRIDAY, MAY 6, 1921



WASHINGTON  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE  
1921

COMMITTEE ON LABOR.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

SIXTY-SEVENTH CONGRESS.

JOHN I. NOLAN, California, *Chairman*.  
 FREDERICK N. ZIHLMAN, Maryland.  
 NORMAN J. GOULD, New York.  
 OSCAR E. BLAND, Indiana.  
 WILLIAM J. BURKE, Pennsylvania.  
 WILLIAM O. ATKESON, Missouri.  
 JOSEPH D. BECK, Wisconsin.  
 OGDEN L. MILLS, New York.  
 CHARLES L. KNIGHT, Ohio.

EUGENE BLACK, Texas.  
 WILLIAM D. UPSHAW, Georgia.  
 ROSS A. COLLINS, Mississippi.  
 GEORGE K. FAVROT, Louisiana.  
 MEYER LONDON, New York.

T. C. GLYNN, *Clerk*.

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MINIMUM WAGE BILL FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.

COMMITTEE ON LABOR,  
 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Friday, May 6, 1921.

The committee met at 10.30 o'clock a. m., Hon. John I. Nolan (chairman) presiding, for the purpose of considering the following bill:

[H. R. 2429. Sixty-seventh Congress, first session.]

A BILL To fix the compensation of certain employees of the United States.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That after the passage of this act the minimum compensation of any person employed by the United States or by the government of the District of Columbia shall be not less than \$3 per day; or if employed by the hour not less than 37½ cents per hour; or if employed by the month not less than \$90 per month; or if employed by the year not less than \$1,080 per annum: Provided, That persons employed on a monthly or annual salary basis and who regularly perform less than a full day's service shall receive compensation at the rate of not less than 37½ cents per hour: Provided further, That the provisions of this act shall not apply to persons enlisted in the military or naval branches of the Government nor to the employees in the Philippine Islands, Porto Rico, and the Panama Canal Zone, nor to persons holding appointments as postmasters, assistant postmasters, rural carriers, postal clerks, carriers in the City Delivery Service, or railway mail clerks: Provided further, That the provisions of this act shall apply only to those persons who shall have attained the age of eighteen years: And provided further, That in the case of an employee receiving quarters and subsistence in addition to his compensation, the value of such quarters and subsistence shall be determined by the head of the department, and the compensation of such employees, plus the value of quarters and subsistence, shall in no event be less than the rate fixed by this act.*

SEC. 2. That upon the passage of this act the heads of departments in which are employed persons as defined in section 1 of this act shall issue new appointments at the increased rate of compensation herein provided.

THE CHAIRMAN. The bill fixes the compensation of certain employees of the United States. I might say that this is a bill similar to one that passed the Sixty-fourth, Sixty-fifth, and Sixty-sixth Congresses, and got up to the point where it passed the Senate and was held up on a motion to reconsider, and got caught in a legislative jam during the closing days of the Sixty-sixth Congress, and failed of passage. I am satisfied that if the Senators had a chance to vote on the measure there would not be any doubt about its going through almost unanimously.

There are a number of people here this morning to be heard on the bill. Before I call upon any of those that are interested in the passage of it, I want to call the committee's attention to a letter that I have received from the Secretary of Agriculture, which will, without objection, be incorporated in the hearing [reading]:

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.  
 Washington, April 25, 1921.

Hon. JOHN I. NOLAN,

*Chairman Committee on Labor, House of Representatives.*

DEAR MR. NOLAN: My attention has just been called to H. R. 2429, which you recently introduced in the Congress. It is not that under the exceptions of persons to whom the bill shall not apply are employees in the Philippine Islands, Porto Rico,

and the Panama Canal Zone. This department is very much interested in this bill as it maintains agricultural experiment stations in Alaska, Hawaii, Porto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands, and to have a minimum wage of \$3 per day to the lower grades of these employees would deplete the appropriations for the stations as well as disturb the local situation. I respectfully suggest the wording finally adopted by the Senate of the Sixty-sixth Congress be used in the bill and after the words "Porto Rico," line 3, page 2, insert the following: "Guam, the Virgin Islands, the Territory of Hawaii, the Territory of Alaska," so that it will read "nor to the employees in the Philippine Islands, Porto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, the Territory of Hawaii, the Territory of Alaska, and the Panama Canal Zone."

Very truly, yours,

HENRY C. WALLACE, *Secretary.*

I called up the department yesterday and invited them to have a representative here this morning. Is there anybody here representing the Department of Agriculture? I asked them to submit statistics to give us some idea as to how this would affect them. It may be that he will come later on.

Mr. Steward, are you prepared to go ahead?

**STATEMENT OF MR. LUTHER C. STEWARD, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES, WASHINGTON, D. C.**

MR. STEWARD. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, the bill which you are considering this morning represents an attempt which has extended over several years, several sessions of Congress, to secure for those of the very lowest paid employees of the Federal service something that will approximate a subsistence wage. The bill was introduced six or seven years ago, at a time when the purchasing power of a dollar was much higher than it is at present. It represented what was in the estimation of those best qualified to judge, from research investigation of the cost of living throughout the United States, a wage which might be termed a subsistence wage, with little if anything in the way of allowance for other than the bare necessities of life. While the cost of living, after ascending very rapidly for something over five years during the war period, has dropped to a certain extent during the last few months, and even though the present cost of living figures are not at the peak, the purchasing power of a dollar is much smaller than it was when the bill was presented with the figures as they are at present.

Speaking for the employees, we have felt that, although \$3 a day does not adequately represent a living beyond a bare subsistence wage, if there could be for the first time established in the Government service the principle that the United States Government would not have in its employ any man or woman who did not receive enough to keep soul and body together on what we choose to call our American standard of living, we would be accomplishing something.

Our organization has 240 branches throughout the continental territory of the United States and its insular possessions, and is representative of several hundred thousand civilian employees, of whom at the present time, while exact figures are not obtainable, there are approximately 50,000 adults who receive base pay less than \$3 a day. As to just what these figures mean, and the many makeshifts, the difficulties attendant upon the eeking out of an existence on the insufficient compensation that is paid by the Govern-

ment for these positions, we have produced at various times before committees of both House and Senate a great mass of testimony. The hearings before the House Committee on Labor from time to time have been very voluminous and have covered the subject very thoroughly. In the hearings before the Senate Committee also a great deal of testimony from individual employees who are affected by the legislation has been presented, as well as a thorough discussion not only of the principle of the living wage, but a general application to employment both private and public.

We have here this morning a group of specimen cases. We have not made any attempt to bring a large number but only a typical few, typical of those who are affected by the legislation in the bill before you. We shall be very glad to furnish testimony from any number of sources if in the judgment of the committee a greater amount is needed, or any points that may not be covered by the testimony of those witnesses here this morning is desired. In other words, the mass of material is so great that we have an almost unlimited supply to depend upon in order to convince, if it is necessary to convince, the committee or the House of Representatives that legislation of this sort is an absolute necessity and in justice to all concerned should have been enacted long ago.

I might say in passing that the bill in practically its present form, with the exception of one or two minor amendments, which will be explained, or which have been explained by the chairman, has passed the House of Representatives on two occasions by an overwhelming majority, thereby registering the sentiment of the lower House of Congress as being not only in favor of the principle, but the fairness of the figure fixed—fairness is hardly the expression—but at least that it is none too high.

THE CHAIRMAN. Mr. Steward, have you some witnesses that you would like to call?

MR. STEWARD. I would like Miss Ethel Smith to be called.

**STATEMENT OF MISS ETHEL M. SMITH.**

THE CHAIRMAN. Whom do you represent, Miss Smith?

MISS SMITH. I represent the National Women's Trade Union League, of which many members are in Government employ, the two organizations having very close connections and affiliations; that is, the Women's Trade Union League and the National Federation of Federal Employees.

MR. CHAIRMAN and gentlemen of the committee, I think I need not call your attention to the fact of the great number of women in the Government employ, and the further fact that they, the women, are here, as in private employ, very numerous in the lowest paid groups. That seems to be a condition against which women are destined to contend for a while, but we had hoped that the United States Government would recognize the fact that it is more than ever important that there should not continue to be that disparity between the wages of women and men.

The particular groups you are more or less familiar with. There are many women in the mechanical departments of the Government, engaged in the mechanical operations in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, the Government Printing Office, the Mail Bag

Repair Shop, and other industrial occupations where they are receiving very low pay, less than the \$3 a day, and less than is paid to men who are doing work of less skill than theirs.

There are women in the Public Library of the District of Columbia who are doing work which requires a college education, and special training besides, who are getting less than \$3 a day. I think fully half of the employees, men and women, of the Library of Congress are getting less than \$3 a day.

The women who do the very laborious cleaning work in the departmental buildings are among those who are affected by this bill through its hourly rate. I want to call attention to the fact that there is provided an hourly rate. Those women to a very large extent are part-time workers. I have heard objections to this bill on the floor of the House and Senate both in the form of sweeping assertions to the effect that part-time workers, particularly the unskilled laborers who are doing only part-time work, would be paid \$3 a day. I trust that every member of the committee is fully aware that this is not true. They are paid by the hour, and if they work only four hours or six hours they get pay at the rate of 37½ cents an hour under this bill.

There is another sweeping misstatement which I think might be mentioned here. I have heard this on the floor of the Senate in particular. First, I want to emphasize, however, the fact that we stand for the principle of at least a living wage for every worker, irrespective of the job. The very least that any worker is entitled to we feel is that he should receive enough to live on. So I do not for a minute wish to indicate any lack of support for that principle in the bill which would pay this minimum to the unskilled employees. But it has been alleged by some opponents of the bill that it would be chiefly the unskilled workers who would be affected by this, and particularly they seem to feel that it will be a very great crime to pay messengers \$3 a day and charwomen as much as that. I think in view of such assertions it would be interesting to run over some of the titles of positions for which the Government offers less than \$3 a day through the civil-service examinations which have been announced during the last year. I will not read this entire list, but it starts like this: Cotton classer's helpers in the Bureau of Markets, \$600 a year; preparator in entomology, \$720, in the Bureau of Entomology and the Smithsonian Institution; aid qualified in radio, Bureau of Standards, calculating machine operator, elevator machinist, medical interne, statistical clerk, apprentice fish culturist, graphotype operator, addressograph operator, mimeograph operator, proof reader, physical laboratory helper, file clerk, forest assistant, aviation engine mechanic's helper, brass foundry helper, skilled laborer qualified as auto mechanic's helper, addressograph file clerk, land-law clerk, junior dairy herdsman, entomological laboratory assistant, assistant engineer of tests, weigher, photostat operator, sailor, teacher, junior electrical engineer, deputy shipping commissioner, teacher of agriculture, draftsman, accounting clerk, photographic laboratory assistant; I will not go through that whole list, but all of them are offered at entrance less than \$3 a day, or \$1,080 a year.

The CHAIRMAN. Would you leave that with the committee?

Miss SMITH. I should be glad to. I understand that in recent years the Civil Service Commission has found it difficult to fill these positions.

Mr. UPshaw. I do not wonder.

Miss SMITH. It is not strange at all, I think, and it seems to me that we should take as a point to emphasize, in view of the continued efforts of the opponents of the bill, to indicate that this is not a bill to raise the pay of the least skilled workers only. Let me repeat, however, that I think the least skilled workers are entitled to consideration as much as the others, just as much as those of greater skill.

I have little more to say, because I know that the other witnesses will cover the various points which are of the greatest importance to us, but I bring this out as one point that has not been so much emphasized.

Following is the list of civil service examinations announced in 1919 and 1920, offering salaries less than \$1,080 a year:

*Civil-service examinations, 1919-1920, offering salaries less than \$3 a day.*

Title.	Branch of the service.	Salary.
Laboratory aid in chemistry and physics.....	Bureau of Plant Industry.....	\$200-\$1,020
Cotton classer's helper.....	Bureau of Markets.....	600- 900
Preparator in entomology.....	Bureau of Entomology and Smithsonian Institution.....	720- 900
Aid qualified in radio.....	Bureau of Standards.....	900
Guard.....	Penitentiary.....	840
Calculating-machine operator.....	Departmental.....	900-1,200
Elevator machinist.....	Department of Agriculture.....	900
Medical interne.....	St. Elizabeths Hospital.....	900
Statistical clerk.....	Public Health.....	1,000-1,400
Apprentice fish culturist.....	Bureau of Fisheries.....	600- 900
Coder.....	War Department.....	600-1,200
Graphotype operator.....	Departmental and field.....	900-1,200
F-1 Addressograph operator.....	do.....	720-1,200
Mimeograph operator.....	do.....	900-1,200
Proof reader.....	do.....	600- 900
Physical laboratory helper.....	Departments of Agriculture and Commerce.....	100-1,200
File clerk.....	Departmental.....	720
Preparator in entomology.....	Bureau of Entomology.....	720
Junior.....	Smithsonian Institution.....	1,020
Dietitian.....	Public Health Service.....	900-1,000
Library assistant.....	Department of Agriculture.....	720-1,080
Field and laboratory aid in plant pathology.....	Bureau of Plant Industry.....	720-1,080
Plate printer.....	Navy-Hydrographic Office.....	900-1,000
Manual-training teacher.....	Indian school.....	900
Preparator in botany.....	National Museum.....	840
X-ray technician.....	Public Health Service.....	600- 720
Tenacitor.....	Indian.....	900-1,200
Minor clerk (punch operator).....	Census.....	900-1,200
Laboratory assistant.....	Mines.....	720- 840
Guard.....	Departmental and penitentiary.....	720- 840
Lithographic press helper.....	Coast and Geodesic Survey.....	720-1,080
Teacher.....	Ordnance.....	900-1,200
F-1 Addressograph operator.....	Departmental.....	1,080
Lay inspector.....	Bureau of Animal Industry.....	900
Officer.....	Post Office Department.....	900- 900
Apprentice fish culturist.....	Bureau of Fisheries.....	900- 900
Physical laboratory helper.....	Department of Agriculture.....	600-1,200
Special assistant agent, protective social measures.....	Social Hygiene board.....	900- 900
Preparator, anthropological laboratory.....	National Museum.....	900
Kindergarten teacher.....	Bureau of Ordnance.....	720-1,080
Domestic science teacher.....	do.....	720-1,080
Manual training teacher.....	do.....	720-1,080
Assistant roentgenologist; junior roentgenologist.....	Public Health Service.....	840-1,200
Preparator in nematology.....	Bureau of Plant Industry.....	900-1,200
Bookkeeper.....	Departmental.....	1,000-1,200
Lockmaker.....	Post Office Department.....	840
Officer.....	do.....	1,000
Photostat operator.....	Bureau of Chemistry.....	1,200
Radio laboratory assistant, grade 1.....	Signal Service.....	800-1,200
Plate printer.....	Navy-Hydrographic Office.....	900-1,200

Civil-service examinations, 1919-1920, offering salaries less than \$3 a day—Continued.

Title.	Branch of the service.	Salary.
Laboratory aid in soil bacteriology.....	Bureau of Plant Industry.....	\$840-\$1,200
Laboratory assistant, junior grade.....	Bureau of Mines.....	1,000-1,200
Photographic laboratory aid.....	Forest Service.....	900-1,000
Multigraph operator.....	Departmental.....	1,000-1,200
Apprentice plate printer.....	Bureau of Printing and Engraving.....	444
Lithographic stone polisher, stone planer, and stone grainer.....	Geological Survey.....	900
Assistant bacteriologist; junior bacteriologist.....	Public Health Service.....	810-1,080
Assistant in nematology.....	Bureau of Standards.....	1,000-1,800
Mold maker's helper.....	Bureau of Standards.....	720-1,000
Apprentice chart engraver.....	Coast and Geodetic Survey.....	600-1,000
Apprentice draftsman.....	Aeronautics.....	900-1,050
Telegraph operator.....	All.....	900-1,600
Instrument maker.....	Bureau of Standards.....	840-1,800
Laboratory aid in foreign seed and plant introduction.....	Bureau of Plant Industry.....	840-1,000
Plumber's helper.....	Treasury Department.....	1,080
Lay inspector.....	Bureau of Animal Industry.....	600
Deck hand.....	District of Columbia police department.....	600
Foundry helper.....	Bureau of Standards.....	720-1,080
Physical laboratory helper.....	do.....	600-900
Fish culturist.....	do.....	900-960
Preparator in nematology.....	Bureau of Plant Industry.....	900-1,200
Laboratory aid in forest pathology.....	do.....	840-1,200
Fireman.....	Interior Department.....	720
Lithographic press helper.....	Coast and Geodetic Survey.....	900
Assistant keeper.....	National Zoo.....	900
Shop apprentice.....	Bureau of Standards.....	720
Automobile mechanic's helper.....	Bureau of Mines.....	224
Mechanical draftsman.....	Patent Office.....	1,000
Statistical clerk.....	Departmental.....	576
Junior mechanic.....	Indian school.....	1,000
Nurseman.....	Post office Department.....	1,000
Forest assistant.....	Forest Service.....	900-1,500
Aviation engine mechanic's helper.....	Bureau of Standards.....	720-1,020
Brass foundry helper.....	do.....	1,000-1,400
Finger-print classifier.....	Bureau of Standards.....	920
Scamblers helper.....	Navy.....	720-900
Skilled laborer, qualified as automobile mechanic's helper.....	do.....	900-1,200
Addressograph file clerk, grade 2.....	Bureau of War Risk Insurance.....	900-1,000
Land law clerk.....	General Land Office.....	720-840
Laboratory aid, motion-picture laboratory.....	Bureau of Publications.....	720-840
Junior dairy herdsman.....	Bureau of Animal Industry.....	860-1,150
Welder.....	Bureau of Mines.....	1,020-1,200
Photostat operator.....	Bureau of Chemistry.....	900-1,000
Scaler.....	Forest Service.....	840-1,400
Teacher.....	Indian Service.....	600-720
Apprentice plate cleaner, apprentice transferer, apprentice picture engraver, and apprentice letter engraver.....	Bureau Engraving and Printing.....	600
Practical optician and glass worker.....	Bureau of Standards.....	1,000-1,600
Laboratory aid.....	Department of Agriculture.....	840-1,240
Deputy shipping commissioner.....	Shipping Commission.....	1,000-1,200
Teacher of agriculture.....	Indian school.....	720-1,080
Laboratory aid in agricultural technology.....	Bureau Plant Industry.....	1,000-1,800
Assistant in nematology.....	Bureau of Animal Industry.....	900-1,100
Clerk.....	Departmental.....	1,000-1,800
Photographic laboratory assistant, grade 1.....	Signal Corps.....	840
Other.....	Post office Department.....	840-1,100
Temporary clerk.....	Departmental.....	720
Pharmacist.....	Bureau Plant Industry.....	720-1,000
Preparator in nematology.....	Bureau of Entomology and Smithsonian Institution.....	720-900
Preparator in entomology.....	Departmental.....	300-480
Messenger boy.....	Bureau of Plant Industry.....	720-1,000
Laboratory aid and field assistant in paper fiber microscopist.....	Bureau of Standards.....	900-1,080
Laboratory assistant, qualified as paper fiber microscopist.....	Departmental.....	900-1,200
Telephone operator.....	Bureau of Fisheries.....	900-1,300
Scientific assistant.....	Departmental.....	840-1,500
Addressograph mechanician.....	do.....	1,000-1,600
Dieting machine operator.....	All.....	900-1,600
Telegraph operator.....	Washington Barracks, Engineer School.....	600
Printing office apprentice.....	Bureau of Plant Industry.....	1,000-1,800
Assistant in nematology.....	Departmental.....	900-1,200
Clerk with knowledge of stenography.....	Bureau of Standards.....	720-1,000
Practical optician and glass worker's helper.....	General Land Office.....	1,000

Civil-service examinations, 1919-1920, offering salaries less than \$3 a day—Continued.

Title.	Branch of the service.	Salary.
Clerk-translator (qualified in Japanese).....	Naval Intelligence Office.....	\$1,000
Laboratory apprentice.....	Bureau of Standards.....	840-1,540
Money counter.....	Treasury Department.....	\$700-1,400
F-1 Addressograph operator; automatic 3-A Addressograph operator.....	Departmental.....	600-1,200
Apprentice plate cleaner, apprentice transferer, apprentice picture-engraver, and apprentice letter engraver.....	Bureau of Engraving and Printing.....	600
Steamfitter's helper.....	Bureau of Standards.....	922
Deputy shipping commissioner.....	Shipping Commission.....	900
Dairymen.....	Indian Service.....	840-900
Third grade, or subclerk.....	Bureau of the Census.....	900-960
Scaler.....	Forest Service.....	900-1,400
Telegraph operator.....	All.....	900-1,800
Printing office apprentice.....	Washington Barracks, Engineer School.....	720
Laboratory aid, motion-picture laboratory.....	Bureau of Publications.....	900
Map printer.....	Navy, Hydrographic Office.....	900-1,200
Statistical agent.....	Bureau of Fisheries.....	1,000
Plumber's helper.....	Treasury Department.....	1,000
Clerk.....	Bureau of the Census.....	900-1,020
Machinist's helper.....	Soil Survey.....	900
Assistant observer.....	Weather Bureau.....	1,080
Female skilled laborer.....	Bureau of Engraving and Printing.....	1,000-1,200
Truck foreman.....	Bureau of Standards.....	1,000-1,200
Lithographic press helper.....	Coast and Geodetic Survey.....	840-1,480
Multigraph operator.....	Bureau of Publications.....	840-1,200
Milwright's helper.....	Bureau of Plant Industry.....	860-1,000
Preparator in nematology.....	Bureau of War Risk Insurance.....	600-1,200
Graphotype operator.....	Bureau of the Census.....	900-1,020
Clerk.....	Department of Agriculture.....	900-1,500
Library assistant.....	Departmental.....	900-1,500
Typewriter repair man.....	Signal Corps.....	1,000-1,400
Radio draftsman, grade A.....	Department of Agriculture.....	840
Clerk-chief.....	Bureau of Plant Industry.....	720-1,500
Laboratory aid in agricultural technology.....	Geological Survey.....	720
Junior topographer and topographic aid.....	Bureau of Entomology.....	720
Preparator in entomology.....	Bureau of Standards.....	720-1,000
Shop apprentice.....	Patent Office.....	840
Freshman draftsman.....	Penitentiary and departmental service.....	600-900
Guard.....	Departments of Agriculture and Commerce.....	840
Physical laboratory helper.....	Bureau of Mines.....	720-1,080
Automobile mechanic's helper.....	Division of Mechanical Technology, National Museum.....	720-1,200
Preparator.....	Public Health Service.....	720-1,200
Druggist.....	Bureau of Ordnance.....	1,000-1,800
Teacher.....	Bureau of Plant Industry.....	900-1,000
Assistant in nematology.....	Public Health Service.....	900-1,000
X-ray technician.....	Indian Service.....	900-1,000
Gar's athletic director.....	Bureau of Ordnance.....	900-1,400
Computer, grade 2.....	Lighthouse Service.....	900-1,100
Radio operator.....	Treasury Department.....	900-1,200
Typewriter lister.....	Departmental.....	900-1,200
Clerk with knowledge of stenography.....	Bureau of Animal Industry.....	840-1,000
Junior dairy herdsman.....	Railway-Mail Service.....	900-1,200
Railway mail clerk.....	Bureau of Standards.....	900-1,200
Aviation engine mechanic's helper.....	Departmental.....	840-1,000
Photostat operator.....	Penitentiary service.....	840-1,000
Guard.....	Bureau of Fisheries.....	720-1,200
Statistical agent.....	Bureau of Standards.....	720-1,200
Practical optician and glass worker's helper.....	do.....	900-1,000
Mechanician, qualified as mechanical store and tool room keeper.....	Bureau of Markets.....	600-1,200
Cotton classer's helper.....	do.....	900-1,800
Assistant observer.....	Weather Bureau.....	1,800
Check and bond sorter.....	Treasury Department.....	900
Machinist's helper.....	Bureau of Standards.....	900-1,200
Herbarium assistant.....	Bureau of Plant Industry.....	900-1,200
Deputy shipping commissioner.....	Shipping Commission.....	900
Apprentice plate cleaner, apprentice transferer, apprentice picture engraver, and apprentice letter engraver.....	Bureau of Engraving and Printing.....	600
Music teacher.....	Indian Office.....	720-1,000
Band leader and instructor.....	Indian school.....	840
Skilled laborer, qualified in pasteboard-box making.....	Post Office Department.....	720-900
Printer's helper.....	Bureau of Markets.....	720-900
Apprentice map engraver.....	Geological Survey.....	900
	Navy, Bureau of Navigation.....	700-800

Civil-service examinations, 1919-1920, offering salaries less than \$3 a day—Continued.

Title.	Branch of the service.	Salary.
Clerk-translator (qualified Japanese).....	Navy, Office of Naval Intelligence.....	\$1,000
Junior censor.....	Bureau of Mines.....	1,020
Radio clerk.....	Commerce Department.....	1,000
Clerk.....	Census Office.....	\$900-1,050
Map colorist.....	Forest Service.....	900
Forest ranger.....	do.....	900-1,200
Minor clerk.....	do.....	900-950
Automobile mechanic.....	Treasury Department.....	1,000
Laborer.....	Sury, Bureau of Navigation.....	1,000
Multigraph operator.....	Department of Agriculture.....	720
Radio operator.....	Lighthouse Service.....	990-1,200
Plasterer.....	Post Office Department.....	900
Typewriter repairman.....	Federal Board for Vocational Education.....	900
Mechanician, qualified as mechanical store and tool room keeper.....	Bureau of Standards.....	900-1,000
Cotton classifier's helper.....	Bureau of Markets.....	900-1,440
Transit man.....	Federal Service.....	900-1,200
Assistant social agent, social hygiene.....	Social Hygiene Board.....	600-1,000
Clinical clerk.....	Public Health Service.....	900-1,200
Clerk, qualified as pharmacist.....	do.....	900-1,200
Shot firer.....	Bureau of Mines.....	840
Mechanical draftsman.....	Patent Office.....	1,000
Radio operator.....	Lighthouse Service.....	990-1,200
Plumber's assistant.....	Treasury Department.....	780
Preparators in the Division of History, Division of Textiles, and Anthropological Laboratory.....	National Museum.....	900-1,020
Other.....	Post Office and Treasury Department.....	\$10-900
Preparator in entomology.....	Bureau of Entomology.....	720
File clerk.....	Departmental.....	900-1,200
Preparator in pomology.....	Bureau of Plant Industry.....	600-1,000
Laboratory aid in agricultural technology.....	do.....	840
Cotton classifier's helper.....	Bureau of Markets.....	900-1,440
Laboratory helper.....	Bureau of Mines.....	900-1,080
Laboratory aid.....	do.....	720-900
Computer, grade 2.....	Bureau of Ordnance.....	900-1,400
Apprentice draftsman.....	Navy, Hydrographic Office.....	1,000-700
Assistant enameled-metal technician.....	Bureau of Standards.....	1,000-700
Lithographic press helper.....	Coast and Geodetic Survey.....	700
Land law clerk.....	Land Office.....	900-1,220
Forest ranger.....	Forest Service.....	1,020
Lithographic stone polisher, stone planer, and stone engraver.....	Geological Survey.....	900
Mimeograph operator.....	Departmental.....	600-1,200
F-lad, mimeograph operator.....	do.....	900-1,200
Graphotype operator.....	Bureau of War Risk Insurance.....	900-960
Deputy shipping commissioner.....	Shipping Commission.....	900-1,200
Special assistant agent, protective social measures.....	Social Hygiene Board.....	1,000
Complete map engraver.....	Coast and Geodetic Survey.....	1,000
Skilled laborer qualified in pasteboard-box making.....	Bureau of Markets.....	720-1,200
Operative.....	Departmental.....	900-1,000
Telephone clerk.....	District of Columbia police department.....	840
Plumber's helper.....	Interior Department.....	720-1,200
Practical optician and glass worker's helper.....	Bureau of Standards.....	900
Fish culturist.....	Bureau of Fisheries.....	720-840
Guard.....	Departmental and penitentiary service.....	600-900
Apprentice fish culturist.....	Bureau of Fisheries.....	900-1,200
Guard.....	State, War, and Navy Buildings.....	600-1,200
Calculating machine operator.....	Departmental.....	600
Deck hand.....	District of Columbia police department.....	600-1,000
Apprentice chart engraver.....	Coast and Geodetic Survey.....	840
Orchardist.....	Agriculture Department.....	720
Shop apprentice.....	Bureau of Standards.....	600
Apprentice plate cleaner, transferer, picture engraver, and letter engraver.....	Bureau of Engraving and Printing.....	900
Laboratory aid, motion-picture laboratory.....	Publications Division.....	720-1,080
Foundry helper.....	Bureau of Standards.....	600-720
Subcellar.....	Departmental.....	1,000
Laboratory aid.....	Office of Public Roads.....	1,000

The CHAIRMAN. Miss Smith, you spoke of opposition. How much opposition has there been to the bill?

Miss SMITH. Numerically I think very little. If I recall the figures in the House the last time it seems to me it was about 312 to 40, or

something like that. It passed by a great majority in the House. In the Senate there was never a vote. But we had indications from Senators which gave us reason to believe that had the vote been obtained there would have been very small opposition numerically. There was a very determined opposition on the part of about 15 Senators who filibustered against the bill for many weeks at the close of both sessions, both the last short session and the previous session. It was very bitter opposition on the part of those few opponents, but so far as we were able to count them, I do not think that they reached a number of more than 15 or 20 in the Senate. By the vote in the House on two occasions, the majority was overwhelming.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you know of any opposition outside?

Miss SMITH. Outside of the Houses in Congress?

The CHAIRMAN. The House and the Senate, I mean from the country, any considerable opposition?

Miss SMITH. I never heard of any, Mr. Chairman. It is one of the interesting facts that I have had brought to my attention quite frequently, that private employers have urged and repeatedly urged the enactment of this bill. We have had evidence of that from all over the country, indorsements from many sections of the country from organized private employers who favor this minimum for Government workers.

Mr. MILLS. Have you, discussed at all the question of rate of compensation?

Miss SMITH. I spoke of the application of the part time rate.

Mr. MILLS. No; as to the actual rates of the minimum pay, \$3 a day, for instance, there is 37½ cents an hour. That is the same rate as the last bill?

The CHAIRMAN. The same rate.

Miss SMITH. I am not sure that I understand your question.

Mr. MILLS. This is what I have in mind. I am thoroughly in favor of the principle of the minimum wage, but my recollection of that is in most of the States where they have a minimum wage the rates are not fixed by law, but are fixed by commissions, which permit more or less of a sliding scale. Am I right there, Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN. That is in relation to women and children.

Mr. MILLS. Yes; but most of the minimum wage laws apply to women and children.

The CHAIRMAN. In the case of public employees, a minimum is fixed, and it is not fixed by commissions, but by the legislature. The minimum wage commission fixes wages for women and children under various State laws for private industries. Minimum wage laws for public employees of States or municipalities are fixed by the State and there is no discrimination as between employees. A fixed minimum wage is provided, fixing the minimum wages of different groups, and they accomplish what we are trying to do in this bill, that is establish a minimum wage and then pay from that on up.

Mr. MILLS. Irrespective of the change in the cost of living?

The CHAIRMAN. I will say that this is fixing it or trying to fix it, and of course if the cost goes up at some future time and there would be a decided change it would undoubtedly go up. This bill was introduced in 1913 before prices began to soar.



Due to the fact that we have since that time each year taken up the question of bonus, the idea would be that they ought to be treated rightly in the matter of bonus above the wage.

Mr. ZIHLMAN. To meet unusual conditions.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes. This minimum was predicated on the old conditions that existed prior—

Mr. MILLS. Prior to the war.

The CHAIRMAN. Prior to the war, and as the bill reads it would entitle these employees to any bonus that might be given by the Government in addition.

Mr. MILLS. Let me ask you whether you know of any opposition from department heads?

Miss SMITH. I have not heard any, except what the chairman himself read this morning as applying to the Territories. That is expressed in a letter which he read. I had not heard of that until this morning. That is on one point only, as relating to certain agricultural employees in the Territory of Hawaii and some of our island possessions. That is the only opposition I have heard of from the department heads.

The CHAIRMAN. On the contrary, there has been a very decided interest in this minimum wage bill by large numbers of the heads of executive departments and the chiefs of bureaus. They say that there is more need of legislation in the interest of the lower-paid employees than the others.

Mr. UPSHAW. Do you know whether it is possible to get the approximate number of employees in these lower wages which the Civil Service Commission has not been able to fill? I think that would be extremely interesting.

Miss SMITH. I do not know how complete a statement could be obtained. I happen to know in one or two instances, for example, in the Bureau of Fisheries, which has quite a large field force, much larger than its Washington force. I was told by the commissioner two or three months ago that 62 per cent of his statutory positions were vacant. I happen to know about that particular bureau. I have heard similar statements for many others. I heard also concerning the Forest Service from members of the Forest Service, and of the American Forestry Association, I think it was, that within a certain period of months 700 men had resigned, and that was at the rate of two a day, if I remember correctly.

Mr. UPSHAW. So the fact is brought out clearly that the Government activities are actually suffering because of the poor wages paid?

Miss SMITH. Unquestionably so, Mr. Uphaw. The Civil Service Commission in its last report puts the turnover in the Government service at something like forty-odd per cent. It is not less than 40, I know. And there have been estimates of the cost to the Government of that high turnover, and they run, those estimates run, into the millions of dollars, because it costs a great deal to replace the employees. There is the cost of examination, the cost of training after the new appointee is installed, the loss of time, and all those things. It is an expensive thing, what the Government is doing in paying small wages.

Mr. UPSHAW. It is an expense which cuts both ways?

Miss SMITH. Yes; an expense to the Government and a great hardship and injustice to people who are struggling to live on such wages.

Mr. UPSHAW. I think that is a very strong point.

The CHAIRMAN. Miss Smith, can you give us approximately an idea of how long it is since the Government revised wages for the particular employees that would be benefited by the terms of this bill?

Miss SMITH. For the particular employees? I should say that they have never been revised, Mr. Nolan. I think that the wage scale now in effect, with the exception of certain positions under the lump-sum appropriations that were created during the war, there has been no revision in the wage scale for Government employees since about 1856.

The CHAIRMAN. The statement was made before this committee repeatedly, and it has never been contradicted, that there has been no revision since 1854, and that there are large groups of employees receiving the same compensation now as men and women in similar employment received in 1854.

Mr. UPSHAW. Do you mean that there has been no effort on the part of the Government to adjust the wages of its employees to the varying conditions, the rising scale in the cost of living, since 1856?

The CHAIRMAN. Since 1854. The great bulk of employees that would benefit under this bill, those carried under civil service and before the civil service went into effect, receive the same rate to-day, plus the bonus, and the only increase they have got is the matter of the bonus since 1854.

Mr. UPSHAW. That is an outrage.

Mr. BECK. May I ask how the \$1,080 a year was arrived at?

The CHAIRMAN. That is the way the Government fixes its salaries, the annual basis. Where they are on an annual basis of \$900 and \$1,000, they automatically increase that to \$1,080. There is a day wage, there is a monthly wage, and there is an annual wage.

Mr. BECK. I understand that, but I heard it called a little while ago a living wage, and I wondered just how \$1,080 a year was arrived at as a living wage.

Miss SMITH. I think that that was the approximation in 1913, according to the then cost of living.

Mr. BECK. That is just what I was getting at. That would be about \$540 now. Then, why not make that \$1,080, \$2,160?

Miss SMITH. Well, that would be, I may say, exactly the figure, or almost exactly the figure, which the Bureau of Labor Statistics fixed as the proper wage at present—\$2,100 or \$2,200, something like that. In 1919, at the request of the Congressional Joint Commission on Reclassification of Salaries, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, under the direction of Dr. Meeker, made a study of the cost of living in the District of Columbia for a family of five, and found it to be \$2,262.

Mr. BECK. Then, if the cost of living should drop to about half what it is now, then what?

Miss SMITH. If such a thing should happen, it would then be up to Congress to consider this matter. Congress appropriates every year for the payment of the Government employees.

Mr. BECK. Since 1854?

Miss SMITH. It has appropriated every year. It has not revised the wage scale.

Mr. BECK. The point I was trying to make, Mr. Chairman, is: I was wondering if those that are in favor of this bill have ever thought out any plan or scheme where those things would take care of themselves. I can see that this bill of four or five years ago, when it was introduced would do justice to the Federal employees, but I can not see that it does now. There may be no other way of handling it. I do not know. Have had considerable to do with drawing minimum wage bills and administering laws, but even those do not take care of the situation, because you can not get commissions to fix them every year or when there are changed conditions.

The CHAIRMAN. I think there is only one answer to that: First, that the employees have had such a terrible struggle against such great odds, and have received no consideration at all, that even this wage fixed would be a godsend to so many of those of them that they hesitate to ask the proponents of this measure, those in favor of it, to increase the rates. They have had so little success in getting the \$3—

Mr. BECK. They will continue to have little success.

The CHAIRMAN (continuing). That they are afraid to ask for anything higher. But when the rates are once established, and things continue as they are, I am satisfied that they will come to you, and they will be justified in coming to you, and ask you to increase these rates.

Mr. UPSHAW. Do you not believe, Mr. Beck, that this bill would be really a little stronger before the House if the rate were increased before it is reported?

Mr. BECK. Yes.

Mr. UPSHAW. That is my honest conviction.

The CHAIRMAN. Before the House we fought to keep in the bill those rates, and in addition to that, we fought a successful fight to permit these employees to enjoy the bonus. Only after a record vote in the House were we able to give these employees who are benefited by this bill the benefits of the bonus. The Senate bill, as reported, deprived them of the bonus, and just kept them to the bare minimum. So, with the tendency nowadays to slash, I think the employees, as a starter, would feel fairly well satisfied, at least for this time, if we could give them this legislation and give them more at the earliest possible moment.

Mr. BECK. I think that is true, but I think somebody ought to devise some system whereby they would not have to struggle along for over half a century to get a decent wage.

Miss SMITH. May I say on that point, for the National Women's Trade Union League, and in fact, as I understand it, the National Federation of Federal Employees takes this position. We would all be very glad indeed to have some kind of a wage commission which could adjust this matter, and I believe that were it considered at all a feasible thing to obtain from Congress, if we felt that Congress would be willing to surrender its own direct authority over this particular thing, that we would be asking you for a bill which would establish a wage commission to adjust the rates as might be deemed necessary.

Mr. BECK. When you get through, I suggest that you draw up that provision.

The CHAIRMAN. I have only been after this for eight years, and when I get this through, I will guarantee you I will try that.

Mr. STEWARD. May I say just a word at that point in reference to the inquiry of Mr. Beck, that we recognize the establishment of a minimum wage as the real foundation of the proper readjustment of all compensation paid by the Federal Government to its employees, for which reason a general reclassification as to all salaries, duties, titles, and methods of dealing with the Government personnel, a subject which will be before both Houses of Congress this session, is as we look at it the next step toward securing a flexible system, a thing which we have never had. It has always been everybody's business, with the result that nothing has been done, except little piecemeal bits.

Mr. Chairman, in order to show how very meager is the minimum wage called for by this bill, I wish to put before the committee at this point figures as to the cost of living in the District of Columbia as ascertained by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. This study was originally made in August, 1919, at the prices then current, and the total budget of that date, economists tell us, taking into account the rise and fall of prices since then, is practically the cost of living at the present time.

It is therefore pertinent to cite that budget here, calling attention to the fact that it provides for a typical family of five, consisting of man, wife, and three minor children, at a standard of living which is defined by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics as follows:

- (1) A sufficiency of nourishing food for the maintenance of health, particularly the children's health.
- (2) Housing in low-rent neighborhoods and within the smallest possible number of rooms consistent with decency, but with sufficient light, heat, and toilet facilities for the maintenance of health and decency.
- (3) The upkeep of household equipment, such as kitchen utensils, bedding, linen, necessary for health, but with no provision for the purchase of additional furniture.
- (4) Clothing sufficient for warmth, of a sufficiently good quality to be economical, but with no further regard for appearance and style than necessary to permit the family members to appear in public and within their presumably rather narrow social circle without slovenliness or loss of self-respect.
- (5) A surplus over the above expenditures which would permit of only a minimum outlay for such necessary demands as—
  - (a) Street car fares to and from work, and necessary rides to stores and markets.
  - (b) The keeping up of a modest amount of insurance.
  - (c) Medical and dental care.
  - (d) Contributions to churches and labor or beneficial organizations.
  - (e) Simple amusements, such as the moving-pictures once in a while, occasional street car rides for pleasure, some Christmas gifts for the children, etc.
  - (f) A daily newspaper.

A family with the above described possessions would be able to maintain itself in health and simple decency, but would have no more of the comforts and "trimmings" of life than would be necessary for good physical health and fair mental health. Thus no provision is made for savings, none for vacations of any kind, and none for books or other educational purposes.

It needs to be emphasized that in adopting such a budget level as the basis of the present study it was not intended in anyway to set up that level as a desirable ideal. The frequently used phrase, "the American standard of living" connotes something much higher and much more expensive. What was had in mind was simply the establishment of a bottom level, below which a family must not go without physical and moral deterioration.

The cost of living on this basis for a family of five in Washington, D. C., was found by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in August, 1919, to be as follows:

Food.....	\$773.93
Clothing:	
Husband.....	\$121.16
Wife.....	166.46
Boy (11 years).....	96.60
Girl (5 years).....	82.50
Boy (2 years).....	47.00
Housing, fuel, and light.....	513.72
Miscellaneous.....	428.00
	546.82

Total budget at market prices..... 2,262.47

Changes in cost of living subsequent to August, 1919, carried these figures to \$2,430 for such a family in December, 1920, and at the present time, according to the best available information, has brought them back to approximately the same as the 1919 budget.

At the same time the foregoing family budget was made, the Bureau of Labor Statistics made a similar study as to the cost of living for a self-supporting woman without dependents. That budget amounted to \$1,117 a year at prices in August, 1919. Brought down to date, according to the same calculations as applied to the family budget above cited, the individual woman's budget would still be around \$1,100 a year in the District of Columbia.

As further testimony on this subject, Mr. Chairman, let me bring to the committee's attention the cost of living exhibits submitted to the Railroad Labor Board at its hearings in Chicago last week, by W. Jett Lauck, consulting economist for the railroad men. Mr. Lauck furnishes a comparison of budgetary studies from different sources and different parts of the country, brought down to date of April, 1921.

In the preface to his table he states (*italics mine*):

The accompanying table shows the cost of each of the important budgetary studies at the time it was made and its cost in December, 1920, as computed by applying the increase in the cost of living reported by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics to have taken place since the date of the original study in the locality where it was made.

The last column of the accompanying table shows the cost of the studies brought down to April, 1921, by assuming that the cost of living has declined 7 per cent between December, 1920, and April, 1921, *this being the largest estimate of decrease made by any student of the subject*. This assumption, however, is a highly liberal estimate of the probable decline, as there is reason to believe that the actual decline between December, 1920, and April, 1921, was much less. (See exhibit on recent changes in prices and cost of living.)

Yearly cost of various family budgets at time studies were made and cost in December, 1920 and April, 1921.

[All of these budgets are based on a family of husband, wife, and 3 children of dependent age.]

Budget.	Original study.		Per cent increase to December, 1920.	Cost, December, 1920.	Cost, April, 1921, assuming decrease from December, 1920.
	Date.	Amount.			
SUBSISTENCE LEVEL.					
Wage earners budgets in New York City, Louise B. More.	1906.....	\$831.38	120.9	\$1,880.70	\$1,749.05
Standard of living in New York City, R. C. Chapin.	1907.....	900.00	120.9	1,988.10	1,848.93
Family budgets in Chicago Stockyards district, J. C. Kennedy.	1914.....	733.62	93.3	1,418.08	1,318.81
Cost and standards of living in New York State, New York Factory Investigating Commission.	1914.....	876.43	101.4	1,765.13	1,641.57
Cost of living of unskilled laborer's family, New York City, New York Bureau of Personal Service.	February, 1917....	980.42	68.1	1,648.09	1,532.72
Suggested family budget, social service bureau, Bellevue Hospital.	.....do.....	1,087.81	68.1	1,710.94	1,591.17
Subsistence budget submitted to National War Labor Board, W. F. Osburn.	June, 1918.....	1,386.00	26.5	1,733.29	1,630.56
Suggested budget for a textile mill worker's family, Little and Cotton.	March, 1919.....	1,723.00	14.7	1,976.28	1,837.94
Cost of living among wage earners in Fall River, Mass., National Industrial Conference Board.	October, 1919.....	1,573.90	6.2	1,671.48	1,554.48
Cost of living among wage earners in Lawrence, Mass., National Industrial Conference Board.	November, 1919...	1,658.04	4.4	1,730.99	1,690.82
MINIMUM COMFORT LEVEL.					
Minimum budgetary estimate for Pacific coast workers, Jessica B. Peckoloff.	October, 1917.....	1,476.40	47.8	2,182.12	2,029.37
Budget used in Seattle and Tacoma street railway arbitration award.	December, 1917....	1,505.60	48.0	2,228.29	2,072.51
Budget submitted to National War Labor Board, W. F. Osburn.	June, 1918.....	1,760.50	26.5	2,227.03	2,071.14
Budget for a Government employee's family in Washington, D. C., U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.	August, 1919.....	2,262.47	4.0	2,352.97	2,198.26
Workingman's standard of living in Philadelphia, Bureau of Municipal Research.	November, 1919...	1,803.14	3.4	1,864.45	1,733.94
Budget for bituminous coal mine workers, W. F. Osburn.	January, 1920.....	2,118.94	.7	2,133.77	1,984.41

<sup>1</sup> The reports of the board give data for two standards. The figures for the "more liberal standard" are used in this table.

In the exhibit on "Recent changes in prices and cost of living" appear the following statements (*italics mine*):

#### RECENT CHANGES IN PRICES AND COST OF LIVING.

##### WHOLESALE PRICES NOT A GUIDE TO COST OF LIVING.

Perhaps the most frequent error in discussions of cost of living is the confusion of a decline in wholesale prices with a decline in the cost of living. All experience goes to show that, while cost of living usually follows the movement of wholesale prices, it follows at such a distance as to offer no practical assistance in such a highly practical matter as the relationship of wages to living cost. The most striking example of this fact emerges from the experience of the past few months. Between June and December, 1920, wholesale prices (according to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics) declined no less than 30 per cent. During the same period the cost of living (according to the same authority) declined barely 7 per cent. In other words, during this period there was a very great decrease in wholesale prices but a relatively unimportant decrease in the cost of living.

There are two reasons for this result, both of common knowledge, but of such importance as to need constant reiteration. The first is that retail prices are controlled by many factors other than those controlling whole-sale prices; thus, while retail prices usually move in the same direction as whole-sale prices the movement tends to be very much less pronounced. The second reason is that a large part of the family budget goes for items such as house rent, car fare, and sickness, not covered by the usual commodity price reports. \* \* \*

Since December, 1920, the only important decline in the things purchased by the average family has been in the retail prices of food. According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics average retail food prices in February, 1920, were 11 per cent lower than in December, 1919. Assuming that prices continued to fall through March at the same rate, the total decline from December, 1920, to April, 1921, would be approximately 16.5 per cent. As food consumes 38 per cent of the average family expenditure, such a decline in food prices, if all other items in the budget remained unchanged, would represent a total decline of barely 6 per cent in the total cost of living. In practice this is substantially what has happened.

Retail clothing prices for articles of the same quality have probably declined little, if at all, since December. (Spring clothing normally costs less than winter clothing.) Coal has declined slightly, but gas and electric rates are reported to have increased in many communities. House rents, according to the best information, have tended upwards in the larger cities at least. Thus, balancing all of these factors, it appears that the maximum decrease in the cost of living which could possibly have occurred since last December may be roughly measured by the decrease in food costs. This as pointed out above would mean a decrease in the cost of living approximately 6 per cent.

#### SEASONAL FLUCTUATIONS IN PRICES.

No real significance, however, can be attached to a decrease in food prices—or indeed of prices of most commodities—at this time of the year. Price declines between winter and spring are regularly recurring phenomena. \* \* \* In the case of food prices this is particularly striking. Thus, in every year between 1911 and 1915 food prices declined from their high peak in November—January to a lower level in February—April by a percentage varying from 7.6 to 3.

Moreover, and this is a point of much significance, the recent wholesale price index numbers of food products show a marked slowing up, and in several cases, a complete stopping of the downward price curve. \* \* \*

Briefly summarizing, therefore, it appears that since last December the maximum decline in the general cost of living has probably not exceeded 6 per cent; and such decline was due primarily to a decline in food prices; that food prices normally decline during these months; that, therefore, the real permanent decrease in cost of living since last December has at best been so small as to be negligible. Moreover, it is by no means impossible that a complete survey made at the present time would show a higher level of living costs than existed last December, for while there can be no question as to a real decline (possibly entirely) in the prices of food, there is grave question whether this has not been more than met by rent increases, for rents, as is generally known, have shown a remarkable upward tendency in recent months. During the war years were, on the whole, slow to rise. Up to December, 1919, according to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, rents had risen on the average only 23.3 per cent since 1913. In the next six months the percentage increase grew to 34.9 and in the last six months of the year to 51.1 per cent. Thus the rate of increase during recent months advanced progressively. If the increase has continued since last December at the rate developed in the preceding six months the advanced cost of housing would go far to compensate for practically all of the decreases in other articles.

That rent advances since the first of the year have been extraordinarily high in very many places is indicated by the "rent wars" frequently reported in the newspapers at the present time. To cite the one city of Chicago, data obtained from the Tenants Protective League and presented in connection with the recent printing trades arbitration case shows rent increases averaging 54 per cent between 1920 and 1921. Similar data from the Chicago Real Estate Board, also presented in connection with the above mentioned arbitration case, show increases in the neighborhood of 45 per cent between May 1, 1920, and May 1, 1921. As rent constitutes about 13 per cent of the average family expenditure, an increase of 45 per cent or more in rents since December last would more than balance the decline in food prices and mean that the cost of living was now at the same level or higher than it was in December, 1920.

The CHAIRMAN. Have you other witnesses?  
Mr. STEWARD. Mr. Oliver.

#### STATEMENT OF MR. ARTHUR C. OLIVER.

Mr. OLIVER. I am in the District service of the Government, which does not come under the civil service.

I am here, as I understand it, to introduce two or three of the witnesses from the District government service.

I just want to say that Mr. Steward and Miss Smith have covered the subject of the bill so far as the employees are concerned, and what we hope to get by this bill—that is, to lower paid employees—so that it would be useless to attempt to say much more on the subject.

I would like to bring before you gentlemen, however, just one fact, and that is that in previous Congresses every time the question of salary adjustment for those of the Government service has come up there have been Congressmen who have come out on the floor of the House and made the sweeping assertion during the course of their speech—and I presume their unusually fine personalities have dominated the rest of the Congressmen to such an extent that there has not been enough contradiction to this statement, which I have heard time and time again—that is, the Congressman who is opposed to any increase in the basic salaries has repeatedly made the statement—and I have seen it numbers of times, and you gentlemen probably have also—that the employees, well, we will say, who get \$900 or \$600 or even lower, which go, in the Government service, at the basic salaries, as low as \$120, as in the hospital service. They have repeatedly made this statement that these men are really not men; they are boys, and it is a boy's position. A \$900 position, in the eyes and minds of a good many Congressmen, of those people, all those people who are getting less than \$1,000 basic salary, apparently must be boys.

Well, according to the way they have to live, they really are living on what a boy or girl who has just left school, just starting out in life, receives. But I have with me from the District service three gentlemen who have been in the service, two of them for a good many years. One of them is a \$900 man, who is in my own office. He has direct dealings with the public and answers all questions on water rates—I am in the water department—and he has to have at his finger ends the experience to answer intelligently all these different questions that arise, and has to know the figures and give them to the public as they come to the counter. This man has been in this one department for 10 years. He is getting less money to-day than he was when he started, because he has been transferred from the per diem roll to the statutory roll.

The other two gentlemen get \$600 a year. One is a messenger, who has been in the service for 13 years and is the father of 13 children, 9 of them living. It is true that this gentleman has a little outside income. I do not know what that happens to be.

The other gentleman has been married three years. He gets \$600. He has to work both day and night to make ends meet. You will hear some figures to show the absolute impossibility of what the average man or woman is up against in Washington, from the rent standpoint, if nothing more—rent and coal. These people that you will probably hear—I do not want to take up your time—I simply want you to know that these are real people, that these are real

people that are testifying about what they have got. It is not theory. It is just what the Government is paying them, and I am calling them in the hope that it will wake Congress and the public up to the fact that it does not pay a decent rate and is not justice to give any wage that is not a living wage, where it is necessary to hold down two jobs in order to make even a bare living.

Mr. ZIHLMAN. Have you any figures as to the number of employees in the District?

Mr. OLIVER. No, sir.

Mr. ZIHLMAN. Or as to the wage?

Mr. OLIVER. I can only tell you as to the conditions in my own office. I am not the head of the office. I am a per diem man. I am in the water department of the District service. In our office I should say approximately 40 men, and of those 19 I know are on the statutory roll at a salary of \$900 a year. There are about six positions which pay \$1,000 basic salary a year, and you must remember, gentlemen, that these positions boys could not fill, young girls could not fill. It happens that we have an office where there are no ladies at all. The positions are filled by men, and all call for experience and knowledge of—well, general bookkeeping and clerical work, and yet I say the bulk of the positions are paid less than \$1,000 basic salary.

Of course we might bring more up here, but most of the men are married that are in this particular department, and I know myself that in the majority of cases in our office most of the men there, their wives work, or they work nights in order to make ends meet, and I do not think any Government, it does not matter whether it is the United States or any other Government, should allow such a thing.

Mr. BECK. I presume most of the employees in the District service are inhabitants of the District?

Mr. OLIVER. Yes, sir.

Mr. BECK. Now, private employers, if it applies to private employers as it would in this case, you would say in reference to the minimum wage that whatever they are paying in wages to the members of the immediate family just helps the family that much to live and relieve the burden of the head of the family. What could you say as to that?

Mr. OLIVER. I say this, that I do not think there are married men who like a home—I am not married myself, but I hope to be if I can get a little raise—

Mr. UPSHAW. I move we raise him.

The CHAIRMAN. If you have everything else beside the raise, you are all right.

Mr. OLIVER. I have the girl to start with, anyway. I would answer the gentleman's question in this way: I think that the theory of American life is that the man should be the earning one of the family; that there are no family conditions here; that a man should be the earning party, and anyway that the wife should keep house. I am not married and I do not want to get into an argument.

Mr. BECK. I mean the private employer would say if the man has nine children, he would come back and say they can help a little.

Mr. OLIVER. They can when they grow up.

Mr. BECK. They do not take so much when small.

Mr. OLIVER. Yes. He could starve or force his children to work. We do not want beggars around Washington. The point I make is that the United States should not have in its service men or women who are over 21 years of age who should be paid less than a living wage, enough to take care of a small family.

Mr. BECK. Should not even if they are under that.

Mr. OLIVER. I am only taking something, as Mr. Nolan says, as a start. Of course we are fighting for something that, as I understand it, has got a chance to pass. We want to bring out the fact of this thing that will help. We do not ask for luxuries.

Mr. COLLINS. Are any of these people that are asking for this increase qualified electors; can they vote?

Mr. OLIVER. Yes, sir; a lot of them live in Maryland, if you can call it living.

Mr. COLLINS. Did you ever try to back your demands at the ballot box?

Mr. OLIVER. Personally, I was born and raised in New York, and always voted in New York until I came to Washington and tried to get into the war. I have no vote now.

Mr. COLLINS. In other words, do you not think you can help yourselves considerably by sending to Congress and the Senate people who are friendly to you?

Mr. OLIVER. Yes; but I would answer that question this way, that among the men in the District government service it is hard to get representatives who can devote the time to stirring up enthusiasm over something that has been for years impossible. As it has been stated, there has been no salaries changed since 1854.

Mr. COLLINS. I am trying to get you to help yourselves.

Mr. OLIVER. I would like to, but I have to work. I am on a per diem basis.

Mr. COLLINS. I understand, but you can certainly take enough interest in your Government to become a voter.

Mr. OLIVER. You can not in Washington.

Mr. COLLINS. You can vote in New York.

Mr. UPSHAW. I suggest to the gentleman from Mississippi that most of these people in the District have not any Congressman unless we be their Congressmen.

Mr. COLLINS. A lot of them I understand live in Maryland, or elsewhere?

Mr. OLIVER. I did not say a lot. I presume some live in Maryland and some in Virginia.

Mr. COLLINS. In other words, what I am trying to say is this: As a rule, the people that you are representing are taking no interest or paying no attention whatever in politics; paying no attention whatever to the people that are friendly to them, only when election time comes around, and the result is that they have few friends in Washington and elsewhere.

Mr. OLIVER. Well, undoubtedly that is so, but as I say, among the class of employees that I come in contact with, most of them are men who are absolutely half worried to death to make both ends meet, and they are glad enough when they get through their two jobs to get enough sleep without trying to do something with a hard-shelled bunch of Congressmen. That has been tried before.

Mr. COLLINS. I think you should consider what I suggest.  
Mr. OLIVER. It is a good point.

Mr. STEWARD. I want to say in this connection that the employees of the Federal Government have been realizing for a number of years that they have a representative Government and that they are not represented in it, and the only way they could be represented in it was to do something for themselves. Congress, in the act of August 24, 1912, authorized their organization and their petitioning Congress, individually and collectively, a right which had been hitherto denied them. Since that time they collectively, through their organization, have exercised in so far as the law relative to political activity will permit, their right as citizens to acquaint their Members of Congress with legislation in which they were vitally interested. And there are many, many Members of Congress and of the Senate at the present time, in fact all of them, have had an opportunity to hear from their constituents who are not only Federal employees but also citizens and voters, as to their views on pending legislation of such vital interest to the whole group.

The CHAIRMAN. In other words, Mr. Collins, the law limits the right of civil-service employees in reference to political activity. I may say that they go further, the civil service goes further than I think the law permits them to go. They even restrict them as to the right to discuss and take part in political questions. It does not make any difference what the particular political question is, they have made a broad ruling on that that I do not agree with, and I have had quite a bit of controversy with them over it. For instance, the question of municipal ownership of a lighting plant, a street car line, prohibition, or any other public question that might come before them, they contend that that is partisan political activity.

Mr. UPSHAW. Even to discuss the economical side of a question?

The CHAIRMAN. Even to discuss it. A ruling has been put into effect within the last eight or nine months that a man's mother, father, sister, or brother who happened to be in the Federal service, his relatives could not take part in politics.

Mr. COLLINS. I understand that.

The CHAIRMAN. Now let us get along if we can. Have you any other witnesses, Mr. Oliver?

Mr. OLIVER. I would like to call on Mr. Beatty, the gentleman I spoke of as having been in the service 10 years and getting less money than when he started. He is from the water department.

#### STATEMENT OF MR. CHARLES BEATTY.

Mr. BEATTY. I do not know as there is anything that I can say outside of what Mr. Oliver has said to you in regard to the conditions of the District government. As he said, I have been employed for 10 years, and I am getting less money than when I started. I had to take a reduction in salary to get transferred from one roll to the other.

Mr. UPSHAW. And yet there has been no complaint against your efficiency?

Mr. BEATTY. Not that I know of.

Mr. UPSHAW. The fact that you are holding on to your job shows that you have been efficient.

Mr. BEATTY. I think so.

Mr. OLIVER. I would like to say that he is considered one of the most efficient countermen.

Mr. UPSHAW. That is what I was trying to bring out. That makes the case all the stronger.

Mr. BEATTY. I do not know anything else that I can say. Mr. Oliver gives a good outline of the situation there.

The CHAIRMAN. What is your salary?

Mr. BEATTY. \$900.

The CHAIRMAN. Are you married?

Mr. BEATTY. No, sir. I have three dependents, however, two sisters and a nephew.

Mr. UPSHAW. He is old enough to be married.

The CHAIRMAN. Can you give us some idea of how you get along on this salary of \$900?

Mr. BEATTY. Because we own our home, and I am employed a good deal at night. I have worked as much as six or eight weeks at a time until 12 o'clock each night, in a lunch room.

The CHAIRMAN. Tell us about that. Your home is the family home?

Mr. BEATTY. Just two sisters and myself and a nephew. One of the sisters is practically an invalid. She could not do anything if she wanted to.

The CHAIRMAN. And you say you do some work at night.

Mr. BEATTY. I worked for six or eight weeks until 12 to 1 o'clock each night.

The CHAIRMAN. What time do you go to work in the evening?

Mr. BEATTY. Six or seven in the evening. I work all day at the District Building.

The CHAIRMAN. You work all day in the District Building and then go to work in the lunch room at night?

Mr. BEATTY. It is only at times that I work every night. I have only been there lately two nights each week. Previous to that I have been there two months seven nights in a week. I am the only one that brings anything in the house. There is no one else there to bring it.

The CHAIRMAN. If you had to pay rent how would you get along?

Mr. BEATTY. I would be out in a tent, sir.

Mr. ATKESON. What time do you go to work in the morning?

Mr. BEATTY. Nine o'clock in the District Building, and quit there at 4:30, and then I go home and hang around until about 6 or 6:30 and go up to the lunch room.

Mr. OLIVER. I would like to say in the case of Mr. Beatty that, of course, he is not a married man, but I understand that he has dependents the same as a married man would.

Mr. Morris is a \$600 a year messenger.

#### STATEMENT OF MR. EDWARD M. MORRIS, DISTRICT BOARD OF CHARITIES.

Mr. MORRIS. I do not know what I can say, gentlemen, but I am willing to answer any questions that you may put to me.

The CHAIRMAN. You are married, Mr. Morris?

Mr. MORRIS. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. How many children?

Mr. MORRIS. I have nine living children. There is one of them that helps along—only one. But, of course, the others are out of the way. I have nothing to do with them. They are married and out of the way. I have one boy that helps out some, and one dependent child.

Mr. UPSHAW. How on earth do you and your children live on such a salary?

Mr. MORRIS. Just exist, that is all. We have to manage it some way. I have been with the District government now for 13 years. I got \$50 when I started in, in 1900, and you must figure 13 years ago I had more children to look after than now. Rent is \$25.75 a month for a house that I have to do some repairing myself to keep it in condition to live in. I am after the landlord to do something now, on which I promised to meet him half way, so far as my labor is concerned. But financially I could not meet him any part of the way. Everything has been pretty good within the last 13 years. During the war it was a pretty good struggle. I had to buy coal by half a ton at a time, such necessary things of life went up, you understand, sugar and coffee and other necessities.

The CHAIRMAN. Have you any outside help besides that one child?

Mr. MORRIS. No, sir. He is in the Library over here, and gets \$50 a month. He is about 17 years of age, going on 18. I have one child who is absolutely dependent. Of course, that is all I have, and my wife.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you do any work outside?

Mr. MORRIS. Occasionally I get a little odd job, sometimes helping my boy out. He is an electrician. The gentleman here has seen me up at the church at New York Avenue helping my boy out once in a while up there.

The CHAIRMAN. Have you had to get any assistance from anybody?

Mr. MORRIS. Well, only in that way; my son, and little extra jobs. I have a very frugal wife that economizes in every way, shape, and form that she possibly can to help out in that way, but I consider that in my office, my title is a messenger, but I am not a messenger in the sense of the word. I am not a messenger; I am a general utility man. I do a little bit of everything that comes along. I do clerical work, filing work, some typewriting work; I have a responsible position. I handle a great many thousands of dollars during the year. I go to the bank, do the banking. I purchase nearly all the railroad tickets for the transportation of paupers, the appropriation that Congress gives, and for various other things which pertain to the clerical and important and trustworthy work, and for the past 13 years I have done all that, handled thousands of dollars, and never made a mistake. We have never lost a cent.

The CHAIRMAN. Do the members of the committee desire to ask Mr. Morris any further questions. If not, Mr. Oliver, have you any more witnesses?

Mr. OLIVER. Yes; this gentleman, Mr. Bateman. He is a tube operator, and he handles the distribution of the mail in the District Building to the various tubes that go to the different departments. He is paid \$600 a year.

# STATEMENT OF MR. WILLIAM W. BATEMAN.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Bateman, will you just make whatever statement you desire?

Mr. BATEMAN. I would say about what the other gentlemen have said. I can answer questions. I would like to say to this gentleman here that I do exercise my right at the polls, and I think my Congressman and Senator both are in favor of this bill—Senator France and Congressman Mudd.

The CHAIRMAN. Are you a married man, Mr. Bateman?

Mr. BATEMAN. Yes; I have a wife and three children, one with infantile paralysis.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you live in the District or Maryland?

Mr. BATEMAN. Just across the border in Maryland, Prince George County.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you own your own home?

Mr. BATEMAN. Not quite.

The CHAIRMAN. Will you give us some idea as to how you are getting along?

Mr. BATEMAN. I will tell you. Very fortunately I met a man named Carmody and he sold me this ground and put a house on it for me, and let me pay him as I can, and I have had a little farming around there after I get home, and raise my own vegetables and stuff like that. That is how we get along. Of course the wife and the children—we do not have any pleasures at all except our home, but we love to be with each other.

The CHAIRMAN. How long ago since you started buying your home?

Mr. BATEMAN. About 12 years.

The CHAIRMAN. You could do that now?

Mr. BATEMAN. No.

The CHAIRMAN. You could not make a start?

Mr. BATEMAN. Could not start it.

The CHAIRMAN. And during all of that time you have not paid for it yet?

Mr. BATEMAN. No, sir. I owe probably \$600 or \$700 yet. But this is a good man I am dealing with, and he does not care how I pay him, because he is a friend.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you do any odd jobs or any work outside?

Mr. BATEMAN. No; I can not do it, because I have blood pressure, and I can not work too hard because I am liable to kill myself. But this job that I have got—and I will tell you about it—that I work in a place something similar to this. Right by the side there is a line of tubes that go up to the different departments. There are some thirty-odd of them, and I have to transmit the business from one to the other. They all send them to me as a center, you know, and I send them from one to the other, and that keeps me almost constantly on my feet. I go there in the morning at half-past 7, and I sort out and distribute, probably, well at the present time I have two bags of mail every morning and then I have two more mails during the day, and besides attending telephones and doing odd little things that are required of me.

Mr. UPSHAW. According to me that ought to be at least a \$1,500 job.



Mr. BATEMAN. Yes; it ought.

The CHAIRMAN. Do the members of the committee desire to ask Mr. Bateman any other questions? If not, we will hear the next witness.

Mr. STEWARD. I should like to have Mr. Davis, from the Library of Congress, called.

#### STATEMENT OF MR. ROBERT F. DAVIS.

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Chairman, of course this will be information off-hand. I am a representative of the watchmen of the Library of Congress, and the laborers and the charwomen. I think we have probably more than 110 men and women all told, and I think, except about five of them without the bonus are getting less than \$3 a day. That is the chief engineer, the chief electrician, the chief of machinists, and the carpenters. That is all on the superintendent's force that are not getting less than \$3, less the bonus. Of course, that is outside the disbursing office. But it is almost impossible for a man to live on \$3 a day. After a man pays his bread bill, milk bill, gas, electric lights and coal, and carfare, he has nothing, and it looks like now that it would take up that \$1,080 quickly. The papers tell you that everything is going down, but you go out and order a pair of shoes half soled, and you will pay as much as a pair of shoes cost a few years ago. I had to live away from my family for 20 years. I had a wife and seven children, and I had to send them to my father-in-law because I could not support them.

We have to have a uniform. One man had a cap made four weeks ago and he paid \$6.65 for it. I had a friend give me a uniform coat and took it over on F Street to have it altered, and it cost me \$10. I thought it would cost about \$3.

Now, I went to work in the Library 19 years ago. I bought a uniform which I had made at Saks'. I paid \$18 for it. Now, to get the same uniform you would have to pay about \$60. We have men in the department with big families. One man has eight, and one six, a man with his wife and six children, no help at all, and his wife broke her ankle the other day and had to have her foot taken off. Now, such men as that, how do you expect them to live? He has to pay \$25 house rent, and he has a wife and six little children and no help at all. I am buying my house and have three children helping me. If either one of them was to happen to drop off or get married, I would have to sell the house. I could not pay for it. It would be impossible for me to pay for it on the salary that I am getting.

The CHAIRMAN. What is your salary?

Mr. DAVIS. My salary with the bonus is \$95.

The CHAIRMAN. Your basic salary is \$75?

Mr. DAVIS. \$75.

The CHAIRMAN. And your position is what?

Mr. DAVIS. Watchman.

Mr. ZIHLMAN. You have to buy your own uniform?

Mr. DAVIS. Yes.

Mr. ZIHLMAN. And it costs \$60?

Mr. DAVIS. Well, I don't know. The last man to have a uniform made had it made on F Street, and it cost him \$70. That is about a year ago. Now, to get a uniform like that now it would cost at least

\$60. You know we have to have a uniform, decent clothes. We can not work in the finest building in the world looking shoddy. We ought to be the best-dressed men in the world as we are employed in the best building in the world.

Take these park police. I think they get \$1,640, or something like that. I think our work is just as much if not more benefit to the Government than that work, because we are watching stuff, old manuscripts, and books, and if they were lost—they are out on exhibition, too—they could not be duplicated. Now, our work I think is much more important than their work. We are called watchmen on the statute books, but we are doing police duty. We have to patrol our beat all the time, working eight hours. I used to be in the Army, and we used to be on post and we would walk 8 hours out of 24 and maybe get 10 or 12 nights in some times. Walking up and down that hard marble floor for eight hours is pretty hard work. I would rather be on the street.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you get any days off in the month?

Mr. DAVIS. I think last year, not counting my leave, I had 14 Sundays. We had to work Sundays and holidays. We work two months longer a year than the Government clerks by working holidays. I think I had three half days on Saturdays. There were 15. We have to be right on time all the time, and this uniform business is very heavy on us. The park police get their uniforms furnished. If one of my daughters or my sons should happen to get married and leave me, I would have to sell my house, because it would be impossible to pay for it, because I can just barely manage to get along now.

The CHAIRMAN. Any further questions to be asked of Mr. Davis? Anything further, Mr. Davis?

Mr. DAVIS. No, I do not know as there is anything further. I would like to have about \$1,500 a year salary. That is what I would like.

Mr. STEWARD. The next witness, Mr. Chairman, is Mrs. Sarah Henry.

#### STATEMENT OF MRS. SARAH HENRY, BUREAU OF ENGRAVING AND PRINTING.

Mrs. HENRY. I am employed at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing at \$2.80 a day. I am a widow with two children. In order to make my expenses I have to work at night. I work at the bureau until 4.30 and then I go to work at 6 o'clock and work until 10.30. There are about 1,400 women in the bureau getting the same money that I am getting, and most of them are widows with children or dependents, and many, many of them have to hold two positions the same as I do. It is utterly impossible for me to get along on the wages I make at the bureau. I have been working the two jobs for three years. Of course, I have to have somebody to look after my girls while I am away at night.

Mr. ZIHLMAN. Where do you live?

Mrs. HENRY. I have been living in Washington until the last three months. I was not able to keep my home, and I had to go live with my sister-in-law.

Mr. ZIHLMAN. What rent did you pay when you were here?

Mrs. HENRY. \$15.50.

Mr. ZIHLMAN. How many rooms?



Mrs. HENRY. I had four rooms. I had my coal to buy and to pay for my gas and my washing and ironing. Of course, I was not able to do anything of that. All of that I had to have done and had to pay for it; and paid somebody to take care of my children while I was away from home.

Mr. ZIHLMAN. Where do you work?

Mrs. HENRY. At Huytlers, Twelfth and F.

Mr. ZIHLMAN. A candy store?

Mrs. HENRY. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. In other words, in trying to make both ends meet, you are deprived of the comfort of your children?

Mrs. HENRY. Yes, sir. I never see my children only on Sundays, except when they are sleeping, of course.

Mr. ZIHLMAN. You now live in Alexandria? What time do you go to work at the bureau?

Mrs. HENRY. At 8.30 and work until 4.30. I do not go home in the evening.

Mr. ZIHLMAN. You get your dinner downtown?

Mrs. HENRY. Yes, sir.

Mr. ZIHLMAN. What time do you have to leave Alexandria in order to get here at 8.30?

Mrs. HENRY. About quarter to 8.

Mr. ZIHLMAN. What time do you get home?

Mrs. HENRY. Twenty minutes after 11.

Mr. ZIHLMAN. Every night?

Mrs. HENRY. Every night but Sunday. This bill if it would go through would not only benefit me, but thousands of others.

Mr. ZIHLMAN. It would give you 40 cents more a day?

Mrs. HENRY. Yes, sir; even that little would help a whole lot.

I do not think there is anything else I want to say, unless you want to ask me some questions.

Mr. STEWARD. Miss Ruth Fisher.

#### STATEMENT OF MISS RUTH FISHER, GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.

Miss FISHER. There is not very much that I can say. I am employed at the Government Printing Office, and I am one of 10 children. There are four children now married and away from home. I have one sister who has just started to work. My father works, but he does not make very much. He is employed at the Columbia Title Co., on E Street.

My work is rather hard at the Printing Office and I am sitting beside girls making 45 cents an hour, and I make only 35 cents, and yet without my help at home, paying board, and if there is anything needed I try to get it. My work is rather hard. Sometimes I have to sit on a chair and reach to the ground and pick up work, count the sheets, and if any work turns out bad, I am held responsible.

The CHAIRMAN. What do you average a month?

Miss FISHER. About \$85 I think.

The CHAIRMAN. With the bonus?

Miss FISHER. With the bonus.

The CHAIRMAN. If you were by yourself and had no bonus and you had to stop down here at this housing project that is run by the Government, what would you have to pay out of that \$85?

Miss FISHER. I do not know what they pay. I pay \$45 a month board.

Miss GLYNN. \$47.50.

Miss FISHER. I only pay \$45.

The CHAIRMAN. I think that is something that the committee ought to know, and I think it ought to be a matter that should be made plain in the record. The Government, with no overhead in the way of taxes, and with as little overhead in the way of upkeep as possible—

Mr. ZIHLMAN. And a deficit each year.

The CHAIRMAN (continuing). Has to charge these girls that are working for the Government \$47.50 a month for board and lodging—is it two in a room?

Miss GLYNN. Some single and some double.

The CHAIRMAN. Some single and some double, and that calls for how many meals a day?

Miss GLYNN. Two meals a day.

The CHAIRMAN. It will give you some idea of what would happen to women who had to work for \$600 or \$700 a year and pay those rates to the Government.

Mr. STEWARD. Mr. Chairman, if I may add, one reason they are able to keep their rates so low is that many of the employees are affected by this small wage. That is one reason why the rate is so low.

Miss FISHER. My father is trying to buy a home, and by my help he can. If I should leave at any time, it would go pretty hard at home.

Mr. STEWARD. Miss Graham, Government Printing Office.

#### STATEMENT OF MISS M. M. GRAHAM, GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.

Miss GRAHAM. I hold the same position that Miss Fisher does, and I get \$900 a year without the bonus. I am the only child at home that can help at all, and my father has not been feeling well for three years. He has some kind of trouble that should be operated on for, but he is not able to have it performed yet. I have one little brother and my father and mother are trying to buy a home, and with my help they are able to do so. If it were not for me I guess they would have to give it up.

We have rather responsible positions. We examine, collate, and put up 20,000 to 30,000 sheets a day, and if any of the work goes wrong, we are held responsible for it. We do the same work practically that the girls do who receive at least \$20 more a month, and we have been overlooked and have not received a raise and we are the least paid in the last four years. I have been working there for four years now, since I have been out of school.

The CHAIRMAN. Do the members of the committee desire to ask the lady any questions. If not that will be all, Miss Graham.

Mr. STEWARD. Mr. Chairman, that is all the witnesses that we have here this morning. To repeat what I said earlier in the hearing, these are merely a few typical instances of many thousands. It is possible to supplement these to any extent that may be necessary.

The CHAIRMAN. I think that is pretty well understood, Mr. Steward. I will say to the new members of the committee that we have had the hearing room so crowded that we had to get the big room on the third floor two years ago, and it we sent out word of these hearings we would have had the same situation confronting us to-day. In 1914, when hearings were held on this measure, covering approximately 420 pages, stories were told that were hard to believe as to such conditions existing in a city like Washington, especially among Government workers, if they were not actually told, and if they were not borne out by the facts. I will say to the members of the committee that while I have only one set of those hearings, and have loaned it to Mr. Collins, a member of the committee, to look over, the hearings are available to all the rest of the members of the committee, and surely conditions have not improved since those hearings were held, only to the extent that some of the employees have received a pittance of \$20 a month added to their salaries. We could crowd these hearing rooms for weeks and months with people not alone in Washington but all over the country.

I think we ought to have for the record tables on living and wages that were prepared by Prof. Odgen and submitted to the Senate committee about two years ago, and those that were prepared by the experts of the Department of Labor and submitted, and if you have them Miss Smith, or Mr. Steward, I am sure the committee would be glad to have them incorporated in the hearing. You probably have not them at the present time, but perhaps you can insert them.

Mr. STEWARD. We can file them between now and Monday. We should want to bring the figures up to the minute. Some of the Bureau of Labor Statistics are not up to date, and we want to bring them to date, even showing the slight decreases in order to be absolutely fair. We can do that between now and Monday.

Mr. UPSHAW. I want to say, Mr. Chairman, that this is the first hearing on this bill that I have attended. I voted for it in the last session. These revelations that have been made to-day are simply amazing. They will disturb my peace of mind and heart for days to come, and I would like to vote now to report the bill out, and pass it to-morrow, and make it immediately effective.

The CHAIRMAN. I would say that the statements made to-day are mild compared with the statements that can be made here if we desire to bring people here to tell their stories. It is a terrible thing to have men and women here and tell exactly the conditions under which they have been compelled to live. But if you will read that book which has been referred to by the newspapers here as the "Book of heart throbs," you will get an idea of the situation.

Mr. UPSHAW. I want to say this, Mr. Chairman, I think if these witnesses here or anybody else could make these statements before Congress, or if the Congressmen who have been opposed to the bill would hear what we have heard this morning, there would not be a dissenting vote.

Miss SMITH. If Mr. Upshaw would multiply the cases he has heard this morning with something like 50,000 in the United States and 18,000 in the District of Columbia, he would have a correct picture.

(Thereupon at 12 o'clock m. the committee adjourned.)

MSH 22000

**END OF  
TITLE**